

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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-----073444 211752Z /47

O P 211743Z MAR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 072238

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PEPR, AG, MO, MR, FR, SP

SUBJECT: MOROCCAN ARMS REQUEST

REF: STATE 57412

1. DEPARTMENT IS CONCERNED THAT ALGERIANS MAY MISINTERPRET
NEGATIVE DECISION ON MOROCCAN REQUEST FOR ARMS TO USE IN
THE SAHARA AS SIGNALLING ESTRANGEMENT BETWEEN RABAT AND
WASHINGTON. WHILE WE CANNOT PRECLUDE ALGIERS TAKING THIS
POSITION IN ITS OWN MEDIA--TO EMBARRASSMENT OF MOROCCANS
WHO COMPLAINED OF ALGERIAN MEDIA MISINTERPRETATIONS DURING
FOREIGN MINISTER BOUCETTA'S TALKS IN WASHINGTON--DEPARTMENT
DOES WANT TO DISABUSE ALGERIANS OF ANY REAL MISUNDERSTAND-
ING CONCERNING RELATIONS BETWEEN U.S. AND MOROCCO. WE
DO NOT WANT TO GIVE ALGERIANS ANY REASON TO CONCLUDE THAT
U.S. WOULD BE LESS CONCERNED BY ANY STEP UP IN POLISARIO
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ATTACKS AGAINST MOROCCO OR MAURITANIA.

2. AMBASSADOR SHOULD SEEK APPOINTMENT AT FOREIGN MINISTRY
DURING WHICH HE SHOULD MAKE FOLLOWING POINTS:

-- FOLLOWING CONSULTATIONS WITH CONGRESS, THE ADMINISTRA-
TION HAS DECIDED NOT TO SELL AT THIS TIME ARMS TO THE

MOROCCAN GOVERNMENT FOR USE IN THE WESTERN SAHARA AND MAURITANIA.

-- THE U.S. PLANS TO CONTINUE ITS TRADITIONAL MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WITH MOROCCO.

-- THE U.S. IS AWARE THAT THE ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT IS PROVIDING MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THE POLISARIO MOVEMENT AND DOES NOT BELIEVE THIS ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE POLISARIO'S ATTACKS ON ALGERIA'S NEIGHBORS EITHER PROMOTES A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE SAHARA DISPUTE OR FURTHERS THE INTERESTS OF PEACE IN THE REGION.

-- THE U.S. REMAINS FIRM IN ITS ADVOCACY OF A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT AND WILL CONTINUE TO URGE THE NATIONS INVOLVED TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT. VANCE

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